



RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
LANSING



KEITH CREAGH
DIRECTOR

SUBMITTED:

August 15, 2016

MEMORANDUM TO THE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

Subject: Fisheries Order 201.16
Special Fishing Regulations, Big Island Lake Complex, Schoolcraft County
FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Authority:

The Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, authorizes the Director and the Commission to issue orders to regulate the taking of fish in the waters of this state.

Discussion and Background:

This Order covers special fishing regulations governing the waters of Big Island Lake Wilderness in Schoolcraft County. The area consists of 5,295 acres containing 23 lakes, ranging in size from five to 149 acres and joined by short, marked portages forming an expansive waterway for kayakers and canoeists. This popular destination is a designated wilderness area within the Hiawatha National Forest located in the central Upper Peninsula. Use of motorized equipment and equipment used for mechanical transport (including carts and portage wheels) is generally prohibited on all lands designated as wilderness. Wilderness areas require special fishing regulations such as: gear restrictions, shortened possession seasons, increased size limits, and reduced possession limits to protect and conserve fish populations from over harvest within the area. These regulations have been effective and in place for many years. The Order has undergone staff review and is being submitted for renewal. Several lake names are proposed for addition to the Order to help clarify the coverage of these regulations. No changes are proposed to the current fishing regulations for Big Island Lake Wilderness.

Issue Pros and Cons

Maintaining the current regulatory structure will continue to protect the limited fishery resources within the wilderness area which anglers currently support. There are no cons to note.

Neighboring States

Placing special fishing regulations to protect and enhance fisheries is an accepted practice. Fishery managers utilize special regulations as a means to restrict or expand different angling opportunities. Anglers are generally supportive of added protection or liberalizing fishing regulations when the science is presented.

Biological

High use areas require special regulations to protect fish communities from overharvest for future visitors to enjoy. These regulations are biologically based and have been effective.

Social

Anglers who visit the wilderness area are supportive of these regulations which allow harvest of a limited number of fish for table fare. This allowance may benefit those who choose to pack less food into the area since they can keep some fish for a meal.

Economic

The Department does not expect the proposed changes to have any significant budgetary or personnel implications.

Recommendation:

This Order is being submitted for information and consideration. This item appears on the Department's August 2016 calendar and may be eligible for approval on October 13, 2016.



James Dexter, Chief
Fisheries Division




Russ Mason, Ph.D., Chief
Wildlife Division



Ronald A. Olson, Chief
Parks and Recreation Division



Gary Hagler, Chief
Law Enforcement Division



Bill O'Neill, Chief
Forest Resources Division



William E. Moritz, Ph.D.
Natural Resources Deputy

SPEARING EXCEPTIONS**LIST A – INLAND WATERS****WATERS CLOSED TO NORTHERN PIKE AND MUSKELLUNGE SPEARING**

It shall be unlawful to fish by any means other than hook-and-line for northern pike or muskellunge in the following waters:

Alger County	Kingston Lake
Alpena and Montmorency Counties	Fletcher Floodwaters
Barry County	Thornapple Lake (from McKeown Rd T3N, R8W, S27 to Barger Rd T3N, R7W, S20)
Chippewa County	Caribou Lake
Clare County	Budd Lake
Clinton County	Lake Ovid
Delta County	Dana Lake
Dickinson County	East Lake, Island Lake, South Lake, and West Lake (all within Groveland Mines)
Iron County	Brule Lake, Chicagon Lake, Lake Emily, Paint Lake, Paint Pond (Brule Isle Imp.), Stanley Lake, and Swan Lake
Kent County	Campau Lake and Murray Lake
Keweenaw County	Lake Gratiot
Lenawee County	Lake Hudson
Luce County	Round Lake (North Manistique Lake)
Otsego County	Big Bear Lake
Schoolcraft County	Grassy Lake and McKeever Lake
St. Joseph County	Long Lake (T6S, R12W, S7)
Van Buren County	Bankson Lake and Round Lake (T4S, R16W, S31)

WATERS WITH SPEARING AND GAFF HOOK RESTRICTIONS**Cheboygan County**

April 1 through June 15, inclusive, it shall be unlawful to take or attempt to take any species of fish with spearing gear or gaff hook from the following waters:

Black River

Cheboygan River

Indian River

DESIGNATED TROUT STREAMS OPEN TO NORTHERN PIKE SPEARING**Cheboygan County**

December 1 through March 15, inclusive.

Tower Pond: a hand-propelled spear may be used to harvest northern pike (through the ice).

DESIGNATED TROUT STREAMS OPEN TO SPRING SPEARING

The following designated trout streams are open to the use of spearing gear from April 1 through May 31, inclusive, for taking bowfin, bullheads, burbot, carp, catfish, drum, longnose gar, gizzard shad, goldfish, grass carp, cisco (lake herring), smelt, suckers (as listed above), and whitefish:

Alcona County

Bryant Creek from Vaughn Lake downstream to Little Lake

Buff Creek

Sucker Creek from confluence of Vincent Creek (T27N, R8E, S9) downstream to Hubbard Lake (T28N, R8E, S36)

Calhoun County

Nottawa Creek: from Calhoun County line (T4S, R8W, S31) upstream to T3S, R5W, S35

Rice Creek: South Branch Rice Creek from confluence of Rice Creek and Kalamazoo River (T2S, R6W, S25) upstream to Concord Road (Jackson County)

Chippewa County

Trout Creek downstream of Big Trout Lake (T42N, R3E, S31)

Prentiss Creek (T42N, R2E,)

Delta County

Squaw Creek downstream of County Road 513

Mackinac County

Doe Creek (T43N, R10W)

Foley Creek downstream of I-75

Hoban Creek downstream of US-2

Hudson Creek (T41N, R11W, S8)

Martineau Creek downstream of I-75

McClouds Creek

Milakokia River, from Milakokia Lake downstream to Heinz Lake

Norton Creek from M-135 downstream to South Manistique Lake

Nunn's Creek downstream of Highway M -134

Pearson's Creek, T42N, R1W and R1E

Rabbits Back Creek downstream of Mackinac Trail

Scrums Creek (T42N, R11W, S11)

Taylor Creek (T43N, R12W, S2, 11, 12 and 13)

Mason County

Sable River from Freesoil Road downstream to Custer Road (T20N, R16W, S22)

Van Buren County

Dowagiac River and tributaries upstream of 50th Street (T45N, R15W, S35)

Lake of the Wood Outlet to confluence with Dowagiac River (T45N, R15W, S34)

FISHERIES ORDER

Special Fishing Regulations, Big Island Lake Complex, Schoolcraft County Order 201.16

By authority conferred on the Natural Resources Commission and the Department of Natural Resources by Part 487 of 1994 PA 451, MCL 324.48701 to 324.48740, it is ordered on October 14, 2016, the following section(s) of the Fisheries Order shall read as follows:

The Big Island Lake Complex is described as all lands and waters bounded by County Road 445 on the west, County Road 437 on the south, U. S. Forest Service Haywire Grade Snowmobile Trail on the east and Townline Lake Road on the north. The area includes all connecting waterways ~~with and~~ 192 major lakes **plus several unnamed lakes: Cucumber, Big Island, Townline, Mid, Upper, Coattail, Onega, McInnes, Klondyke, Klondike, Center, Neds, Vance, Twilight, Farm (Blush), Byers, Nevilles, and Bluegill, Pear, and Jarr Lakes**, all in Schoolcraft County.

1. It shall be unlawful to fish by any means other than hook-and-line.
2. Artificial lures only, use of live bait is prohibited.
3. Minimum size limits, possession limits, and open seasons are as follows:

Species	Open Seasons	Min. Size Limit	Possession Limit
Muskellunge (including Tiger Muskellunge) (see Note 1)	May 15 – November 30	42 inches	1 fish per angling season
Northern Pike	May 15 – November 30	42 inches	1 fish per day
Bass	Sat. before Memorial Day – November 30	18 inches	1 fish per day
Yellow Perch, Bluegill & Pumpkinseed	Last Sat. in April - November 30	No size limit	5 fish per day in combination
Trout (Neds & Twilight only)	Last Sat. in April – Sept. 30	15 inches	1 fish per day

Note 1 - A nontransferable Muskellunge Harvest Tag must be obtained prior to harvesting any muskellunge. The tag is at no cost and available at all license vendors. A harvested muskellunge shall be immediately tagged with a validated Muskellunge Harvest Tag. Muskellunge harvest is limited to one (1) muskellunge per angler per year (April 1 – March 31).

4. It shall be unlawful to take or possess any other species of fish from these waters.

This Order shall be assigned number FO-201.16, and is entitled "Special Fishing Regulations, Big Island Lake Complex, Schoolcraft County."

This Order supersedes the Order entitled "Special Fishing Regulations, Big Island Lake Complex, Schoolcraft County," which became effective April 1, 2013, and is assigned number FO-201.13.

This Order shall take immediate effect on October 14, 2016 and shall remain in effect until amended/rescinded.

Issued on this 13th day of October, 2016.

Approved as to matters over which the Natural Resources Commission has authority.

John Matonich, Chairman
Natural Resources Commission

Approved as to matters over which the Director has authority.

Keith Creagh
Director